

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS
ADVISORY BOARD
JANUARY 28, 2003**

1. ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. Present were Chair Geri Clark, Vice-Chair Wayne Arnold, Norman Blanco (arrived 6:45 p.m.), Secretary Jason Curtis (arrived at 6:50 p.m.), Richelle Gilhauley, Katherine Montgomery (arrived 7:00 p.m.), Denis Shaw and Zel Veesser. Also in attendance was Clerk Nina Valdez recording the meeting. Kitty Preziosi, Donnell Johnson, and John Pisula were absent.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July, 23, 2002, August 27, 2002 and October 22, 2002

Vice-Chair Arnold made a motion, seconded by Ms. Veesser, to accept the minutes of July 23, 2002, August 27, 2002, and October 22, 2002. In a voice vote, with Mr. Blanco, Mr. Curtis, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Montgomery, Mr. Pisula, and Ms. Preziosi being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 5-0)

3. OLD BUSINESS

3.1 Brochure

The Board all agreed that the brochure looked great. Chair Clark recommended that the brochures be distributed to the Boardmember's homeowner's associations.

Chair Clark reminded the Board about the Diversity Festival Celebration scheduled for April 5, 2003, and how they could display their banner and brochures at that event.

Ms. Vesser made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shaw, to accept the brochure. In a voice vote, with Mr. Curtis, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Montgomery, Mr. Pisula, and Ms. Preziosi being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 6-0)

4. NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Annual Report to Council

Chair Clark advised that the Annual Report was due to be presented to the Town Council and she volunteered to prepare it. She explained that the report would consist of the Board's mission, accomplishments, and future endeavors. Chair Clark spoke about how the report was to ensure that the Board would not be sunsetted. She indicated that once the report was compiled, it would be forwarded to Assistant Town Clerk Barbara McDaniel, and if permissible, the report would then be forwarded to the Boardmembers.

Vice-Chair Arnold made a motion, seconded by Ms. Veesser, that Chair Clark would prepare the Annual Report and present it to Council. In a voice vote, with Mr. Curtis, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Montgomery, Mr. Pisula, and Ms. Preziosi being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 6-0)

Chair Clark passed the gavel and made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chair Arnold, to add item 4.2 to the agenda.

4.2 Change of Meeting Time

Chair Clark advised that several Boardmembers were having difficulty attending the meetings at 6:30 p.m. and she suggested that all future meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. All Board members were in favor of the change due to their schedules. Chair Clark added that this change would have to be approved by the Town due to staff involvement.

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Ms. Vesser made a motion, seconded by Mr. Shaw, that all future Board meetings would be held at 7:00 p.m. In a voice vote, with Mr. Curtis, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Montgomery, Mr. Pisula, and Ms. Preziosi being absent, all voted in favor. (Motion carried 6-0)

5. TELEPHONE ACTION REQUESTS

Chair Clark advised the Boardmembers that Pat Pecorino, who had made a complaint on December 3, 2002, would not be able to attend the Board meeting due to personal reasons, and may want to bring it to the Board's attention at a future date. The complaint was as follows:

1. Pat Pecorino-Alleged prejudice with two Boardmembers of the Police Athletic League regarding a racial comment made at the October 10, 2002, PAL Board meeting.

In attendance regarding the complaint were Ron and Sandy Nelson, Sid Waldfogel, Todd and Donna Evans, and Officer Robert Spence of the Police Athletic League; Chief John George and Major Ed Taylor, Police Department; Sherman Mosely, Community Relations Coordinator from the Broward County Human Rights Division; and Davie resident and former PAL employee, Richard Clark.

Chief George spoke about PAL members Mr. Nelson and Officer Spence approaching him in October 2002, about a very heated PAL Board meeting and the issues that came up during that meeting.

In Chief George's opinion, it appeared that the matter was more of an employment related issue with a disgruntled employee, but he did not want to minimize the issue to that. He also felt that the problems entailed communication, selection of personnel, hiring practices, communication of coordination of the PAL Board meetings, and purchasing. Chief George felt that these issues were normal for a growing and prospering organization.

Chief George stated that previously, there were community issues in which Mr. Mosely and Jeff Gorley from the Broward County Commission, Human Rights Division, and Vice-Mayor Clark were consulted with to help resolve the problems. He felt that the meeting was a productive start to a resolution and that they all agreed that legal resources needed to be obtained. Chief George took the issue before Council and they approved the expenditure from the Police Department to assist PAL in identifying areas in establishing the right process and protocols according to Robert's Rules of Order. Chief George spoke of the growth of PAL and how it now needed to operate with more formality. He commended Mr. Mosely for bringing forth two people called Advances that attended a PAL meeting and spoke about ways that the PAL could develop strategic planning for their future direction. Chief George felt this was a positive accomplishment that would benefit all of the community. He felt that the educational concept of Study Circles would also be beneficial in the development of the PAL and their representatives. He clarified that the PAL was a nonprofit organization which was not a part of the Police Department, and that it was a partner of the Police Department.

Mr. Mosely explained that Advances were part of a group called Strategies International and were considered sophisticated facilitators who trained the trainers. He explained that they had a very impressive resume and had taught all over the world to major corporations such as airlines and hospitals and he highly recommended them. Mr. Mosely stated that the Advances would prepare a report and make recommendations. He explained that part of the report would be a time-line, made up of objectives that could be accomplished over a specific period of

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time. Mr. Mosely stated that they would also identify those individuals who would be responsible for getting the time-line objectives accomplished. He further explained that the plan would give much need structure to the organization, identify problem areas and would give strategies in which to address those issues.

Mr. Mosely claimed that the Strategic International organization has saved Broward County millions of dollars over the past four years by developing trainers who assisted with problem solving in lieu of having to hire consultants.

Mr. Mosely stated that he looked forward to Strategics' plan of action so that he could establish some of the Study Circles and dialogue groups. He felt very positive about the course of action that would be taken with the PAL and the community to resolve problems from the past.

Chief George commented that the PAL had taken the first step to accept his and Mr. Mosely's recommendation to take the issue to the next level. Mr. Nelson spoke on the growth of the PAL. He expressed his appreciation to the Town for their past joint efforts with PAL and Ms. Evans for her grant writing abilities.

Chair Clark stated that as a Councilmember, she learned that there were no problems, only future solutions and even if something negative happened, you could find a positive solution for it. She agreed with Chief George that there were two issues involved with the PAL and that they were the organization itself, and the community issue.

Chair Clark committed to volunteering to be trained as a community facilitator for the Davie Community Relations Advisory Board. She stated that the Board had previously learned about Study Circles through Mr. Mosely and how they would be one of the tools that would be used to handle community issues. Chair Clark stated that bad feelings or events that had happened in the past may not be easily changed, but she felt that if there was an opportunity for people to be invited to come to a safe place to discuss the sensitivity and issues, they may walk away changed. She was optimistic that Ms. Pecorino would come to the Board in the future and the Board would be able to offer her a positive solution.

Chair Clark spoke about how the PAL had helped Ms. Montgomery's son, Justin. She stated that Mr. Montgomery was involved with the sports program through PAL and was now attending college, and how the PAL had presented him with a laptop computer for his future education. Chair Clark stated that the PAL was like a lifeline to the community and was always there to help resolve problems. She felt strongly about the issues regarding the PAL and the community could be worked out.

Chair Clark stated that in order to be fair to Ms. Pecorino, since she was not in attendance, the Board should not respond at this time to the allegations made. She offered the Board the opportunity to respond if they were not in agreement with postponing the discussion. Chief George responded that the issues may have already been resolved.

Mr. Blanco spoke about his past experiences with the PAL in New York. He spoke favorably in regards to the amount of help they provided to the children. Mr. Blanco further stated that a lot of consideration and tribute was due to the PAL and what they had accomplished.

Vice-Chair Arnold thanked Chair Clark for her extensive negotiations and cooperation with the people involved in the situation which included Chief George and the PAL. He spoke

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about the concept that the PAL represented to the young people in the community and the energy that the PAL puts forth into making the community a better. He commented that there was a lot more to accomplish, but with the PAL, the Davie Community Relations Advisory Board and people like Ms. Montgomery and Mr. Mosely, maybe the realization and dreams of the young people would become a reality.

Ms. Montgomery stated that she felt it was necessary to voice her opinion and concern about what had transpired at the PAL Board meeting. She strongly voiced her opinion about disliking the term "you people" used at the PAL Board meeting and further explained that she felt it was a derogatory insult to people of color. Ms. Montgomery felt that individuals should be addressed by their names or by sir or madam. Ms. Montgomery further explained her past involvement with the PAL and that she had volunteered her time by cooking and working for the children. She agreed that PAL had accomplished a great deal in the community.

Mr. Curtis suggested that Ms. Pecorino be contacted and invited to the March 25, 2003, Board meeting. Chair Clark responded that the Board would contact Ms. Pecorino.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Clark stated that he was at the PAL Board meeting and felt that the words chosen by the PAL members were used with malicious intent. He compared it to the incident that had occurred between former Councilmember Kathy Cox and Councilmember Clark where a comment was made by Councilmember Cox that was indicative of a racial remark. Mr. Clark spoke about his past volunteer involvement with the PAL and the community. Mr. Clark felt that there were serious problems with the PAL program, and felt that the Town had not backed the community in the matter.

Chair Clark responded to Mr. Clark's comments regarding her history with the Town and stated that she was very proud to be a part of the Town and looked forward to her future involvement with the Town.

Chair Clark spoke briefly about the incident with Ms. Cox. Chair Clark pointed out for the record that Mr. Clark used the saying "you people" three times while he addressed the individuals at the Board meeting. She stated that the words were very commonly used and felt that PAL board members had not used the words with the intention that Ms. Cox had used. Chair Clark again referred back to Ms. Cox by saying she had a history and it was evident in the way she treated people, not just by what she had said. She felt that Ms. Cox had tried to prevent District One from ever benefiting. Chair Clark stated that she and the community had won that battle. She did not feel that the situation with the PAL and Ms. Cox were the same. Chair Clark explained that the PAL Board had a heated meeting with friends talking to friends who were upset and it was not a racist issue.

Ms. Montgomery stated that she did not know the PAL members personally and had nothing against the PAL. She advised that in her opinion the term "you people" was a racial slur and she had become very upset at the PAL meeting to the point of cursing because she was offended. Ms. Montgomery stated that she had asked Mr. Evans to step outside to settle the issue in a threatening manner because she was so upset. She also stated that she was not sure if Mr. Evans meant for the words to be offensive, but it was offensive to her. Ms. Montgomery further stated that Mr. Evans explained to her that he had not meant to be offensive.

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Ms. Gilhauley stated that she felt this was a very serious issue which needed to be addressed, and felt that there were other underlying circumstances that had created this hostile situation which the Board may not be aware of. She acknowledged the two very different opinions of the situation.

Chair Clark spoke about the initial meeting regarding the issues, she said Chief George had prepared bullet points on organizational problems resulting from the PAL meeting. Chair Clark explained that there were employment issues that had created the tension. She further explained that wherever there was tension, problems would grow. Chair Clark stated that there were already serious issues before the PAL Board meeting occurred and that the people who were attending that meeting were already angry about issues.

Chief George stated that the PAL was a private non-for-profit corporation and could have their meetings behind closed doors. He stated that occasionally people would attend as a guest and participated in the meetings. Chief George stated that he was not at that particular meeting, but had spoken with six different groups of people. He stated that there were issues with personalities, personnel issues, friendships, old friendships, threats, anger, and racial accusations. Chief George stated that Mr. Mosely was contacted to help the Town separate the issues and help identify the proactive solutions. He spoke about how the intent of the comment would be identified and how it was perceived. Chief George also stated that Mr. Clark addressed the Board using the term several times not intending to offend anyone.

Mr. Mosely asked Ms. Montgomery and Mr. Clark to let him apologize for the insensitivity that they had expressed had occurred. He suggested that sometimes people tended to be over-sensitive when looking at issues. Mr. Mosely spoke about the era when he grew up in Davie and how people were very explicit in their words if they wanted to call you a name, and they treated you in a certain way. He thought that this was an excellent opportunity to go forward in the new millennium. Mr. Mosely stated that if they truly wanted to reach a resolution, then the opportunity to work with Strategics International would help resolve the organizational issues that PAL had.

Mr. Mosely acknowledged Mr. Clark's comments made earlier in the meeting and felt that his concerns dealt with an entirely different issue. He spoke about Mr. Clark's statement of his contribution in helping develop the PAL organization and thought it was unfortunate that the organization may have out grown him at this point and was passing him by. Mr. Mosely acknowledged the frustration that Mr. Clark was feeling.

Mr. Mosely wanted to give his overall opinion as to where the PAL should go from here and he recommended the Study Circles program would be a good forum for the issues to be discussed in an honest and open manner. Mr. Mosely spoke about how ugly the issue tended to be and how people tended to become consumed by it. He made the point that there were underlying issues that had not been dealt with by the PAL, Mr. Clark, his family and his associates.

Mr. Mosely suggested everyone leave the meeting with the understanding that everyone would like to move forward and really try resolve what the problems are with the PAL and the community. He stated that everyone would have to be honest and admit that maybe the problems had started with themselves and determine where each individual stood on the

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issues. Mr. Mosely stated that purpose of Study Circles was not for everyone to agree with everyone, but it was for everyone to listen to one another's complaints or concerns.

Mr. Mosely suggested that the Board move quickly with the PAL organization, and with the community in order to resolve the problems. Mr. Mosely commended Davie for their efforts in improving their reputation.

Mr. Mosely ended by stating that he was hopeful that Council would adopt a resolution for the Town to work with Strategics International. He was also in the process of setting up a Study Circles with dialogue groups for the Board. He warned that if things continued the way they were going, that precious time would be wasted. Mr. Mosely again extended his apology and offered to be the middleman and the person to beat up on if necessary.

Chair Clark commended Mr. Mosely for his presentation. She stated that the Board would be there for the community to work with Study Circles and spoke about the Boards efforts to be involved with community outreach. Mr. Mosely stated that as soon as Council had approved the program, he could move forward. Chair Clark stated that she would meet with Chief George and Council in order to facilitate the matter. She added that she would make sure that flyers would be prepared and distributed in the immediate vicinity of the PAL to residents whom may have been affected by the community issue. Chair Clark commented that she believed that if everyone walked away from this meeting and remembered the statements made by Mr. Mosely, then it would be possible to move forward with progress.

7. COMMENTS AND/OR SUGGESTIONS

Chair Clark asked the Board if there was anything in their communities that needed to be addressed on a future agenda. Ms. Gilhauley spoke about a problem that had occurred with her homeowner's association which involved a racial issue. She believed that with the help of Study Circles, the problem could be resolved. Chair Clark offered to put the item on the next Board agenda, but Ms. Gilhauley declined until she had discussed the issue with her homeowner's association.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Approved: _____

Chair/Board Member